

An
Inaugural Essay;

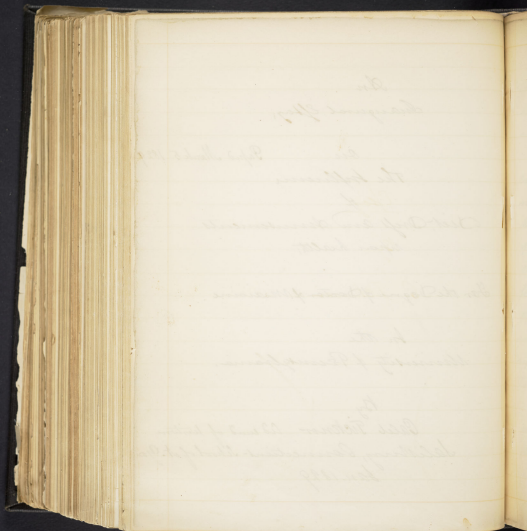
on Paperd March 5 1829

The Influence
of
Diet, Dress, and Amusements
upon health;

For the Degree of Doctor of Medicine

in the
University of Pennsylvania.

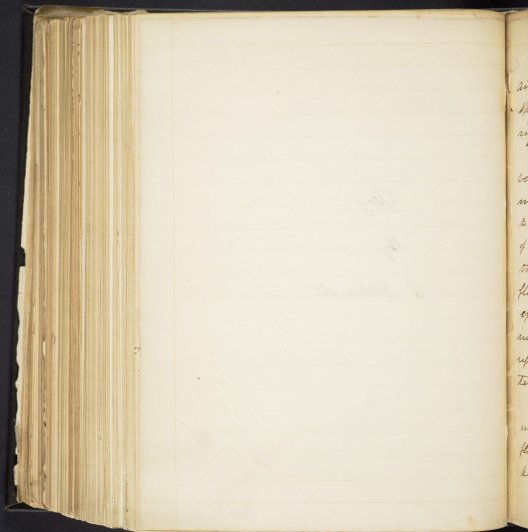
By
Caleb Ticknor Adum of Western
Salisbury, Connecticut - School of St. York
Jan. 1829.



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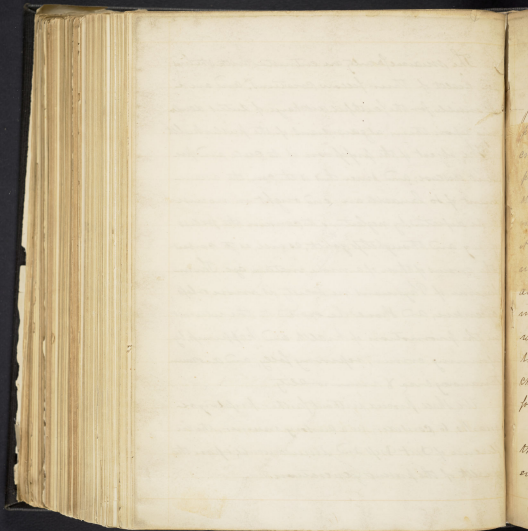
C. Tuckman



The Medical Faculty are entrusted with studies
and health of their fellow creatures, and are
responsible for the faithful discharge of duties devolv-
ing upon them as guardians of the public health.

The object of the profession is to cure and pre-
vent disease; and since this is the case, the attain-
ment of so laudable an end ought in no wise
to be defeated, by neglecting to censure the follies
of gay and thoughtless youth, as well as to correct
the errors of those of a more mature age. Their
fluence of Physicians in Society is more or less
extensive, and should be exerted to the utmost
in the promotion of health and happiness, by
reforming error, repressing folly, and discounte-
nancing vice & immorality.

We shall proceed, without further prefatory re-
marks, to consider, in a history manner, the in-
fluence of Diet, Dress and Amusements, upon the
health of the present Generation.



Lact

No one cause of disease produces effects more injurious or extensive than an imbalanced or improper diet. An article of food, if used without discretion may be productive of disease, whilst taken properly, it may add strength and vigour to the constitution, or it may produce unpleasant or injurious effects in one person, whilst in another it may prove altogether innocuous, or rather wholesome & nourishing. These effects of diet, so different in different individuals, or in the same individual at different times, depend, in part on idiosyncrasy, in part on the state of the system, but most of all, on the distorted and unnatural character of whatever is served up in the shape of food.

The intention of the Creator was, evidently, that man should derive his means of subsistence from the animal as well as vegetable king

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down; this we infer from the structure of the human frame, which has almost proof of it in revelation. The more simple are the articles of nourishment, the more do they contribute to health, comfort, and longevity. For support of this proposition we have but to look back at the Antediluvians, and contemplate the instances of extreme old age then to be met with. Society was then in a simple state; and refinement, with the Hydra-headed monster Luxury, had not yet made its appearance. When the wickedness of man became great upon the Earth, human life was shortened. [†] *Bris au deluge se rangent le déclinement de la vie humaine; le changement dans le pain, et une nouvelle nourriture substituer aux fruits de la Terre.* The mode of living among the Aborigines of our own Country, goes, also, to show the salutary tendency of simplicity in diet— their meat being the flesh of

[†] *Genes. 9. 12. 13. 14.*

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animals killed in the chase, or fish taken from lakes and rivers, whilst their sole article is the only beverage provided for man by the hand of Nature. When do we find a people that can equal these Children of the wilderness in enduring hunger and thirst, cold and heat, or excessive fatigue in any undertaking? But mark the change in their physical as well as moral nature, on the introduction of the habits of the white man, unless Christianity, at the same time, diffuse its benign influence among them.

To draw proofs from those a little more civilized, we find none better suited to our purpose than the Pilgrims, the ancient settlers of N. England. Cornot, and even rigid, in their habits of morality, and compelled to submit on the most homely fare, and accustomed to rigorous exercise, they enjoyed that health and even

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gy, both of body and mind, which their degenerate offspring, at this day, little dream of.

There are to seek for evidence still stronger, we have but to bring the subject directly home, and contrast the two classes found among our select, to wit, the rich and the poor. The rich are that set which may be chosen by a capricious appetite, or which fancy may dictate, while the poor are that which may be demanded by Nature on which circumstances allow. The countenance of a person will, at a mere glance, indicate to which class he belongs, as well as point out the degree of health and constitutional vigour that he enjoys. The majestic but temperate labourer has the glow of health upon his cheek, while the wealthy and luxurious has, generally speaking, an artificial pethness of countenance, or a complexion faded and sallow. It does not follow as a necessary consequence, that, because a man is

My dear friend, I have just received your letter of the 10th inst. and am
glad to hear from you. I am well and hope these few lines will find you
the same. I have been thinking much lately of the friends I have
left behind me, and how they are getting on. I hope they are all
well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed
to find some time to write to you. I have been thinking much
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rich he must be a glutton or wine-bibber but
"man is the creature of circumstances", and those who
have it in their power often yield themselves up
to the indulgence of every unreasoning appetite and
passion.

"Dapes jument et sublata reponi pocula—"

"Mum vino pellite curas atque benignius
Deprome quadrimum latina,

o Thalianche, memum aiata.

Such is the festive song of these bon vivants, till
some unmelodious bird in the guise of Zant or
Dyspepsia changes their notes of hilarity into the
more lengthened strains of sadness.

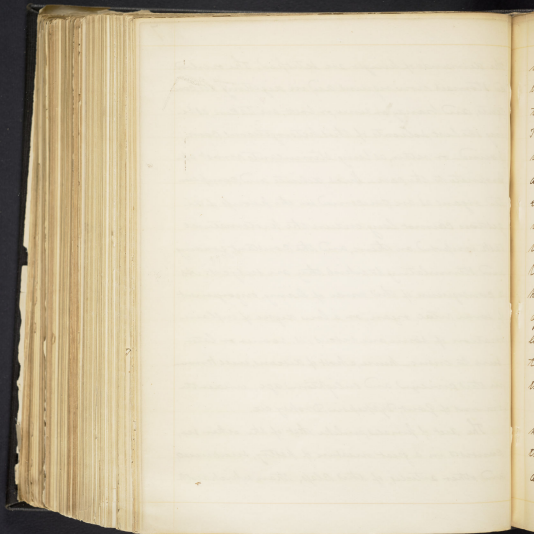
The act of the two sexes is different, and so are
the diseases to which each sex is obnoxious. Many
among the male sex are accustomed to taking
in no very small quantity, solid food of different
kinds—highly spiced, and agreeably flavoured, that
the pleasures of the taste may be prolonged after

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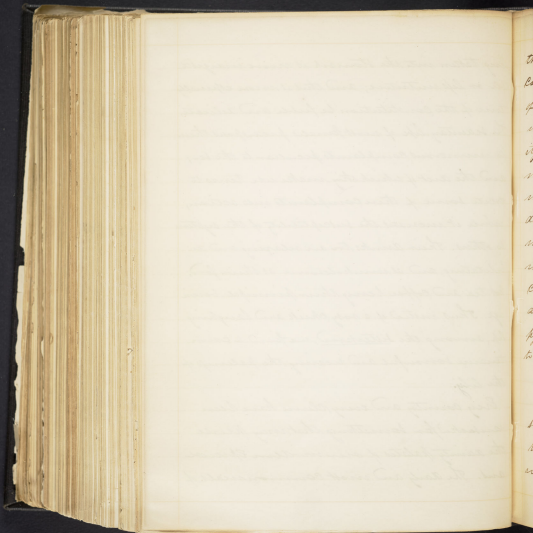
the demands of hunger are satisfied. The overloaded stomach now requires aid in digesting its contents, and brandy or wine, or both, are taken, as being the best solvents of this heterogeneous compound - or rather, as being stimulants most appropriate to the case. Such delicate and complicated organs as are concerned in the process of digestion cannot long endure the preternatural task imposed on them, and the constant goading and stimulating to which they are subjected. As a consequence of this mode of living, engorgement of some vital organ, or a low degree of inflammation of some one of them, is, sooner or later, sure to ensue - hence, a host of diseases, well known in this civilized and enlightened age, under the names of Gout, Dyspepsia, Dropsy &c.

The diet of females, unlike that of the other sex, consists in a great measure of pastry, sweetmeats, and other articles of this class, than which, not



ing taken into the Stomach is more indigestible or less nutritive; and this is more especially true if the Constitution be feeble and delicate. The sedentary life of most females predisposes them to numerous complaints peculiar to the sex; and the diet of which they make use tends to excite some of these Complaints into action, while it increases the susceptibility of the system to others. Their drinks too are relaxing and debilitating, and as unwholesome as their food: hot tea and coffee being their principal beverage. Thus, instead of a rosy cheek and laughing lip, among the Sisterhood, we find a countenance sorrowful and bearing the pangs of the life.

Every country and every climate have been sacrificed for something that may please theainty palates of our modern Epicureans. The daily and most common meals of

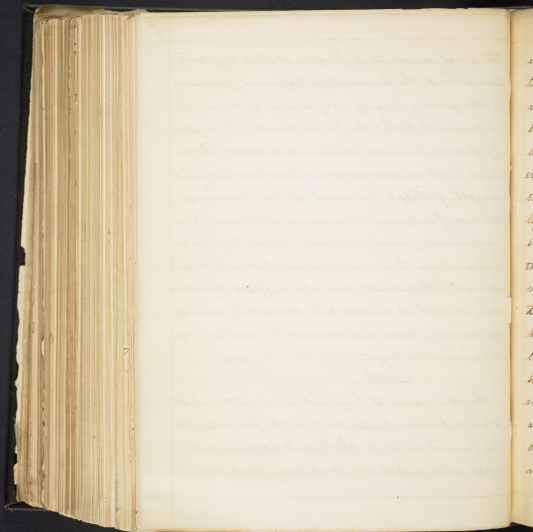


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the great majority of people at this day, are composed of the products of different quarters of the globe. Nearly every article of our diet is artificial, both of food and drink. The ingenuity of man has been tortured to discover some new product, or some new combination, that might gratify a fastidious appetite. Our most delicious fruits, and even our most valuable and nutritious grains, have been made to yield an intoxicating liquor - a poison that has destroyed countless thousands, and a curse nearly as grievous and almost as much to be dreaded by our happy country, as were, in ancient times, the plagues to be feared by Egypt.

Drops

Another cause of frequent ill health in both sexes, but more particularly in the female, is to be found in drops. The tyrant Fashion rules with such despotism at this day, that, scarcely



is then to be found a ready listener to the dictates of nature and reason. The votaries of Fashion sacrifice not only ease and comfort at the shrine of their deities, but even health and life are made to pay the forfeit of their folly and weakness and want. When the curls flowing from their tresses, confined alone to the gay and thoughtless youth, our bills of mortality would not be so alarmingly swelled as they now are. When the faded and wrinkled matron aspires to add new charms to her person, and grace to her turn of form, we are compelled to pity her weakness, and lament the degeneracy of these latter times. Maid and matron alike aspire to flourish in immortal youth; the mother lays aside the awfully becoming hunger and penitence, and arrays herself like the daughter, according to the prevailing fashions in the beaux monde.

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The time has been when people wore that dress
which best comported with conscience and com-
fort, and their pecuniary circumstances—

——— "But we have bid farewell
To all the virtues of those better days,
And all their honest pleads." —

To fashion, so far as it is not incompatible
with health or comfort, it may be expedient
to submit; but in truth, there are no limits to
its sway over the wimes of many of our, other-
wise, most valued females. The youthful dam-
sel is taught to attire herself in such a manner
as may best exhibit a graceful form, or display
the charms of her person. She early learns the
duties of the toilet, and, instead of being en-
gaged in some healthful, domestic employ-
ment, spends her time before

—"The mirror, where the ravish'd maid,
Beholds and loves her own reflected shade."

Much, very much has been said and written up-
on the subject ^{of tight lacing;} but too much cannot be said
till the evil is eradicated, till the fashion is ex-
ploded, and it shall be as customary among la-
dies to go unbraced, as it is now considered gen-
teel to live begirt with hickory and whalebone.

Among our Indian women we find no
instances of tight-lacing; of course, we find among
them none of the evils resulting from a habit
so repugnant to nature; whilst in beauty and
elegance of form, they are not surpassed by any
of their civilized and refined contempora-
ries. The less fashionable part of the female
world are in the possession of good health
and a fine flow of spirits. Instead of a form
delicate and slender, theirs exhibits the strength
and vigour of nature in feminine simpli-
city and loveliness; and instead of a pallid, sick-
ly countenance, the hue of health is imprinted

ed on their cheeks, and their tout ensemble indicates a freedom from disease.

By compressing the Thoracic viscera, tight lacing impedes respiration and the free trans-
mission of blood thro' the lungs hence pulmonary affections. The abdominal viscera
also suffer, the portal circulation becomes languid and obstructed, congestions in the vari-
ous organs ensue, and a numerous train of
diseases are the consequence.

Dress is faulty, not only as regards the manner of
wearing it, but also in respect to quantity and
quality. "The dress of females is an inadequate
security against the weather at all seasons, but
especially in the winter and Spring. It is
truly a great defect in education, that young
women should be taught such an uncreat-
ing regard to the accretion of their persons,
and to the external polish of the more exteri-

sur, for by adherence to this system, simplicity of manner, sincerity of mind, and even health are often sacrificed". In selecting articles of clothing convenience and comfort are not taken into account— at least there are not as they ought to be, considerations of primary importance. If the stuff be only fashionable, new, and gay, nothing farther is required the "summum bonum" of the whole consisting in the display of a stylish exterior.

When we compare the two sexes, the result will be, that, of the two, the female will be found to be the weaker and more delicate; therefore the health of woman should be more carefully watched over, and her system more effectually shielded from the causes that produce disease.

Nothing, in this region of Country, is so destructive to life and health as sudden storms.

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phenical vicissitudes, and any change in the weather is allowed to exert the whole of its bad influence by not guarding against its effects in paying any attention to dress. our ladies will not increase the quantity of their wearing apparel lest they appear too masculine, and in their opinion, cease to please and be charming in the eyes of the other sex. Alas, this fatal misapprehension! when shall reason and common sense be seated upon the throne that has been so long usurped by Fashion and Folly?

Women, confined as they necessarily are within doors, leading a sedentary life, and taking little or no vigorous exercise, are like feeble and sickly plants - they need shelter from the storm and protection from the winter's cold. But man, moved from his cradle to hardship and fatigue, and subject from his infancy to

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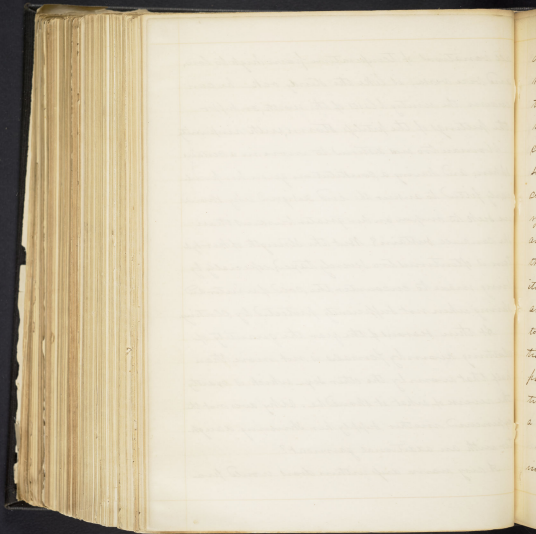
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all variations of temperature from high to low,
and vice versa, is like the sturdy oak - he can
endure the wintry blasts of the north, or suffer
the peltings of the pitiless storm, with impunity.

Woman too ~~is~~ destined to move in a certain
sphere; and having a constitution given her pecu-
liarly fitted to sustain the end assigned, why should
we seek to impose on her greater burdens than
she can well sustain? But the strength of her sys-
tem is oftentimes too severely taxed, especially by
being made to encounter the cold of a wintered
spring when not sufficiently protected by clothing.

At these seasons of the year the quantity of
clothing worn by females is not more than
half that worn by the other sex - which is exactly
the reverse of what it should be. Why does not the
experienced mother supply her shivering daugh-
ter with an additional garment?

A ray warm drop within doors would pro-



due evaporation and ability in either sex, by
 habituating the system to a high temperature,
 thereby increasing the insensible perspiration.
 But on going from a heated apartment into a
 cold one, or into the open air, those leading a
 sedentary life and not much accustomed to such
 changes should never fail to add to their ordin-
 ary dress an extra garment. The thin stockings
 and shoes worn now a days, particularly by
 the ladies, but poorly protect the lower extem-
 ities against the cold of a winter's day, while the
 arms, neck, and breast, are still more exposed
 to a chilling atmosphere. Coughs and Consump-
 tions will continue to pull the fairest flowers
 from society, and make sad widows and orphans.
 The bliss, while permeable shoes are worn upon
 a damp, cold, and even wet pavement.

Every person, old and young, male and female,
 in our variable climate, and in our antip-

Real state of society ought to wear next the skin,
at least six or seven months in the year, an en-
velope of flannel or fleecy hosiery. However dis-
agreeable this may seem at first, a few days are suffi-
cient to remove the inconvenience, and make
such a dress extremely pleasant.

Flannel, being a bad conductor of Caloric,
retains the heat of the body, and prevents those
changes in the temperature next the surface
that would occur without this envelope. Some
females, in the simplicity of their hearts, or
from mere affectation of delicacy, may object
to this mode of dress, but unless they wish the
canker worm, disease, to feed upon their
damnable cheeks, some of their mistaken
notions cannot be too soon eradicated. Every
female, who either walks or rides out in the col-
d season of the year, ought to wear worsted stockings,
worsted flannel, or under their drawers, and

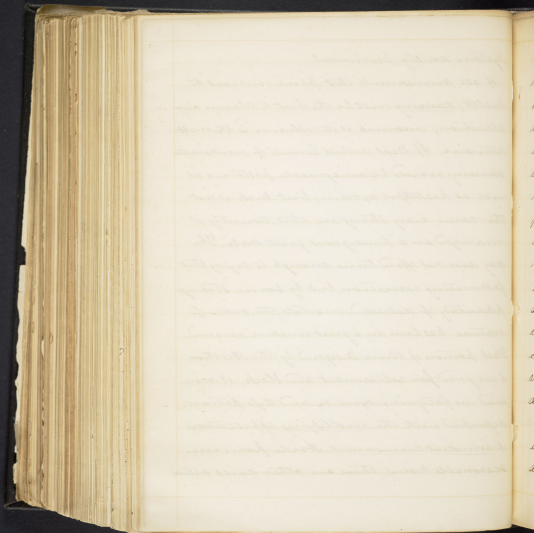
sweats over their shoes. A drop of this sort of le-
 has keeping the whole surface of an equal
 ble temperature, promotes and supports the
 insensible perspiration, so necessary to health
 and a buoyancy of spirits.

Amusements.

Among the numerous causes that sap the
 foundation of a healthy constitution, and
 induce disease and premature decay, are
 the various amusements much in vogue
 among the young of both sexes. Some of
 them operate directly on the body producing
 functional derangement of some vital or-
 gan; or their effect may be perverted indirectly
upon the body thro' the medium of
 the mind. The reciprocal influence between
 the mind and body will exasperate the
 disease which may have been commenced
 in either, and render its effects upon the

System doubly pernicious.

Of all amusements that prove inimical to health, dancing will be the first to claim our attention, inasmuch as its influence is the most extensive. If kept within limits of moderation dancing would be an agreeable pastime as well as healthful exercise; but such is not the case—every thing in this Country is managed on a "prodigious great scale". The day does not afford time enough to enjoy that fascinating recreation, but by some strange phantasy of deluded mortals the order of nature has been in a great measure reversed. That portion of time designed by the Author of all good for retirement and sleep, is occupied in fatiguing exercise and dissipation, dignified with the mollifying appellation of innocent amusement. Aside from unreasonable hours, there are other evils attend



ant upon dancing, not the least of which is
 the fatigue consequent upon so severe exer-
 cise. Persons whose ordinary life, are generally
 indolent & inactive, will, at the ball or cotill-
 ion party, tax the strength of their system to
 the utmost. Such persons are unable to bear
 much fatigue. But of such characters dancing
 parties are generally composed; who, as soon
 as they become weary, seek to reinvigorate
 their system by taking some cordial or
 stimulating drink. This, for a short time,
 answers the purpose admirably well; but re-
 course must soon be had to the same re-
 medy, the common fountain of hilarity and
 vigour. At length poor, jaund nature, spent
 and goaded on to such excess, finds exhaustion

on these occasions too, the dress must be
 light that it may not impede motion, and
 also that it may the better display a grace-

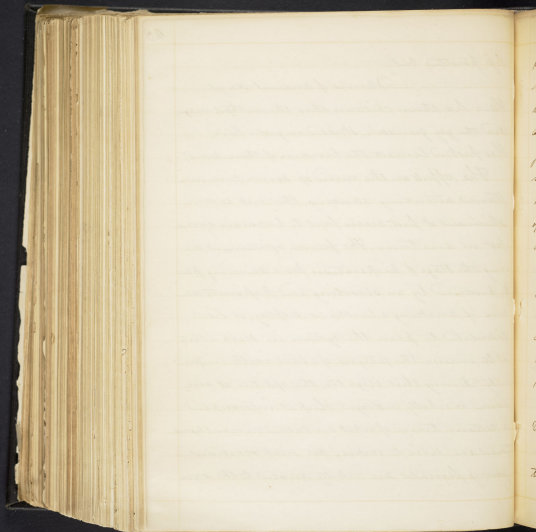
ful form. The measure of this and dances till perspiration breaks out profusely, then at some window counts the refreshing breeze. The effects consequent upon the exposure of our self to a current of air, when in a state of perspiration are to be avoided at any time; but much more so when a delicate female, after warm evening to which she is a stranger and thereby glad, thus places her health and life in jeopardy. If none but the robust and vigorous were to engage in this pastime, the consequences would be less serious; but the feeble and delicate constitutions of most of our females cannot endure this exercise with impunity; and we have to lament that many of the fairest specimens of female loveliness fall victims to this popular and agreeable recreation.

When dancing is confined exclusively to the young our strictures would require to be

left pointer, but—

— — — — — "Dams of ancient days
Have led their children thro' the misty maze,
And the gay granadin, skilled in gestic lore,
Has fished beneath the burden of their score."

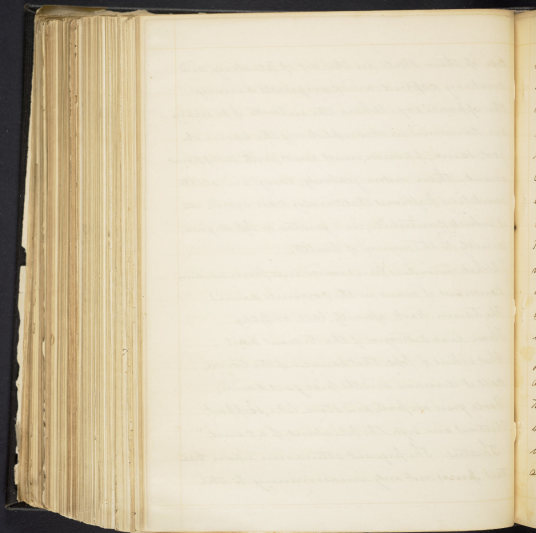
The effect on the mind of some Circum-
stances attending dancing, tho' not so con-
spicuous at first, never fail to become man-
ifest in due time. The febrile excitement dur-
ing the stage of preparation for a dancing par-
ty, produced by an absorbing and passionate de-
sire of making a brilliant display, is little
calculated to place the system in such a state
as to endure the fatigue of a ball with impar-
tiality. During this stage too, the appetite is im-
paired or wholly destroyed, sleep is interrupted
a certain train of what are called nervous symp-
toms are sure to ensue. On such occasions
young females are wholly devoted to the eyes



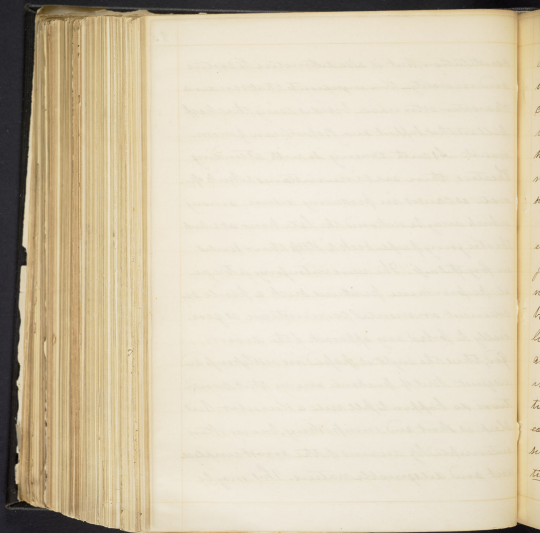
rise of their skill in the art of pleasing and making captives, and conquests among the opposite sex. When the interests of so many are concerned in accomplishing the same object, some, of course, must meet with disappointment—then ensue jealousy, envy, and all the rankling passions that rivalry can excite; all of which contribute, in a greater or less degree, directly to the injury of health.

"What numbers then are won into from adorning
Rondels of merit in the coxcombs' arms!
The tavern, park, assembly, ball, or play,
Those dear destroyers of the tedious day!
That ark of fops, that bazaar of the town,
Call it diversion and the piece goes down;
Fools grin on fools, and stria like sheep,
Without one sigh, the pleasures of a court."

Theatres. The frequent attendance upon these
trous, proves not only undermining to the



constitution, but is also destructive to virtue and morality—two ingredients that render a character estimable, besides being the chief pillars that support our Republican government. As with dancing so with attending Theatres, there are circumstances which operate as causes in producing disease; among which may be reckoned the late hour at which Theatre going people seek to steep their heads in forgetfulness. The mere witnessing a tropical performance produces such a plebeian excitement or mental commotion as generally to forbid any approach of the drowsy God; thus the night is passed in restlessness and agitation. But if perchance one in this condition do happen to fall into a slumber, his sleep is short and unrefreshing, being often interrupted by dreams of the most aimless and disagreeable nature. This may be



denied by the pictures of Theatres: but the anxious and heavy looks depicted in their pale countenances, their loss of appetite etc, show that the mental tranquillity of their minds has been disturbed, and that they have not received the accustomed visits of "kind Nature's sweet restorer."

The contaminated atmosphere of a crowded Theatre is another cause that operates injuriously on the health. That part of the air necessary to perform the function of respiration becomes consumed or deteriorated; and in lieu of it there is generated a gas insupportable and deleterious. Added to this, there is the natural exhalation from the lungs of a multitude in almost every stage of disease. What Lady, who metes the slightest pretension to refinement would think of sitting title a tale, with a gross bumper and inhaling

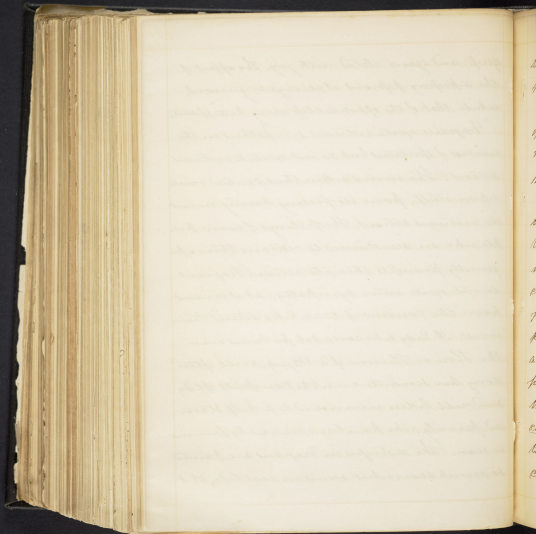
his breath? or with a tobacco-chewer, or smoking
 or one whose mouth is filled with decayed
 teeth - or one whose breath is polluted with
 a loathsome disease? Such a proposition, could
 not fail to shock the delicate sensibility of al-
 most any one of the gentler sex; yet, every la-
 dy who attends a theatre does all this, and
 even more. Not only is the air in the room of
 a play-house contaminated by exhalations
 from the lungs, but almost every person, un-
 der the circumstances we are considering, per-
 spires more or less freely - thereby increasing
 the evil in a two fold proportion. Exchanging
 this heated apartment for the open air, oper-
 ates sometimes, fatally, to health. If the room
 be not too warm, it is often uncomfortably
 cool - the effects in this case are equally bad.

The mind is operated upon in various ways
 sometimes the Spectator is overwhelmed with

[Faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

grief, and again elated with joy. The effect of the depressing passions is always injurious, while that of the opposite class may be different.

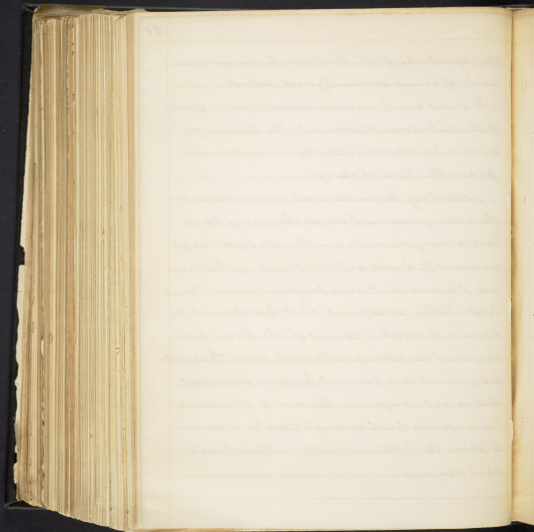
"Tragedies excite virtuous sympathies in the minds of spectators but do not excite to virtuous actions. The mind when thus excited reacts upon itself, from its feeling having no vent in virtuous actions. The feelings of some people who are accustomed to restrain themselves, frequently prompt them to actions. Tragedies do not excite active sympathy, as is evident from the conduct of those who attend them most. A Lady who will sob for hours over the Flaw or Heroine of a Tragedy, will often deny her servants even the comforts of life, and will listen unmoved to a half starved family who have been ruined by famine or war. The distresses in Tragedies are painted to much more extent than occurs in real life, that



the sympathy of the Spectator becomes incapable of being excited by real distress."

It is not our province in this place to speak of the evils done to society by the tendency theatres have to corrupt the morals and deprave the taste of the age.

Sedentary Amusements, notwithstanding the many warm friends they may have both among the male and female sexes, are dangerous to health and happiness. of this species of amusement card playing deserves the first notice, inasmuch as it has charms superior to all other games of the kind, and a more pernicious influence over the youthful mind. We can not for any argument that may be urged in favour of its ~~innocence~~ innocence since proof enough can be adduced to show the positive evil resulting from card playing.



By indulgence in a passionate fondness for
this game that exercise so necessary to health
and a fine flow of spirits is neglected; diges-
tion is imperfectly performed, the appetite be-
comes impaired, and the hours that nature
has allotted for sleep are spent around the ga-
ming-table in watchfulness and mental
commotion. (and playing is passed thus
for by way of amusement, but here the evil
does not stop; cards are often used for the pur-
pose of gambling, and then the effects are much
more lamentable. The mental agitation and
want of necessary repose of one night is fol-
lowed by febrile excitement the succeeding
day; thus the mind acts upon the body,
which, in its turn, is excited to reactions.
The reciprocal influence between the mind
and the body, thus produced and kept up,
often terminates in mental alienation,

or more complete mania. In this state, the unhappy gambler may linger out a wretched existence amid the gloom of despair, or the sufferer may terminate his sad condition by committing the rash act of suicide.

This card playing does not always lead to this unhappy issue, yet when practised only as an amusement a great degree of firmness and resolution is required to withstand its charm.

The system requires regularity in habits of exercise, diet, sleep &c, but a regard for all these salutary habits is sacrificed to the pleaure of whist.

Novel-reading should not be pursued over in silence; but the above remarks are more or less applicable in this case, as well as to all other amusements of a sedentary nature; and of course need not a repetition.

C. Tuckson 16 N. Eighth.

The first of these is the
 fact that the population of
 the world is increasing at
 an alarming rate. This is
 due to a number of factors,
 including improved medical
 care, increased food supply,
 and a general increase in
 living standards. The result
 is that the world is becoming
 more crowded by the day.
 This has led to a number of
 problems, including a shortage
 of food, a lack of housing,
 and a general increase in
 crime and social unrest.
 It is therefore essential that
 we find ways to control
 population growth, or else
 the future of our species
 is in jeopardy.

